Travel Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy specifies the principles by which Macquarie University and its Controlled Entities (the University) will facilitate Travel for Business.

(2) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Travel Procedure.

Background

(3) The welfare and wellbeing of people representing the University is central to a sustainable travel model. The University seeks to provide convenient, comfortable, expedient, safe, and cost-effective options for travel that fulfil the University's duty of care and comply with legal and tax obligations. These obligations are established in this Policy and the Travel Procedure which have been designed to minimise risks and costs associated with Travel for Business and provide clear direction to Travellers regarding approval, booking, and available support services for Travel for Business.

Scope

(4) This Policy applies to anyone who incurs travel and/or travel-related expenses paid for by the University including:

a. officers, staff and Affiliates of the University and its Controlled Entities;
b. students; and
c. volunteers.

(5) The Policy is applicable regardless of the funding source and includes the use of grants, consulting, and/or external funds.

Section 2 - Policy

(6) All Travel for Business must be within appropriate expenditure consistent with budget and business requirements and approved by the relevant Authorising Officer. Travel must only be undertaken after due consideration of business needs, environmental impacts, the risk profile of the travel destination, and the activities to be undertaken whilst travelling.

(7) Alternatives to travel available to the University, such as web meetings and video conferencing, must also be considered.

(8) University Travellers must abide by the Staff Code of Conduct and/or the Student Code of Conduct.

Booking Travel

(9) All Travel for Business, including but not limited to airfares, accommodation and car hire, must be booked and paid for using the University's approved Travel Management Company Online Booking Tool or Travel Consultant, in accordance with the Travel Procedure.

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(10) Where use of the Travel Management Company is not feasible and/or is significantly more expensive, travel arrangements may be made via alternative means with prior approval from the Authorising Officer, who must seek guidance from the Travel Category Manager. Travellers who book International Travel outside the Travel Management Company must register their travel with International SOS. Failure to provide this information may limit the University's ability to assist the Traveller in the event of an emergency.

(11) All flights must be booked on the most direct practical route in economy class.

(12) Subject to the availability of funds as confirmed by the relevant Executive Dean or another member of the Executive Group, a higher class of airfare may be requested under the following circumstances:

a. where a Traveller's employment contract expressly specifies this possibility;
b. funding provision for a higher-class airfare is specified in the terms of a grant;
c. a Traveller's health-related condition/s is assessed by the University Health Management Advisor as requiring a higher-class airfare; and/or
d. other circumstances warranting a higher-class airfare, which must be approved by the relevant Executive Dean or another member of the Executive Group.

(13) Domestic and Trans-Tasman outgoing flights must be booked via the Travel Management Company Online Booking Tool or Travel Consultant using restricted airfares with restricted or flexible airfares for the return flights.

(14) International flights must be booked via the Travel Management Company Online Booking Tool or Travel Consultant.

(15) Extra legroom seats (e.g. exit row seats) within economy class may be booked for international flights, subject to approval by the Authorising Officer, who must consider budget limitations prior to authorisation.

(16) University Travellers who wish to upgrade an airfare class to a higher class must do so with their own funds or frequent flyer points.

Health, Safety, and Security

(17) Use of the Travel Management Company for all bookings will help to ensure the health, safety and security of the University's Travellers.

(18) Travellers and Authorising Officers must comply with travel-related duty of care and personal safety requirements as determined necessary by the University and in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Policy.

(19) Travellers may be required to complete a Travel Risk Assessment prior to travel (refer to the TravelRight webpage).

(20) The Traveller and Authorising Officer must ensure that the required visas, vaccinations and additional insurance (if necessary) are obtained prior to travel. Risks must be controlled as reasonably practicable to ensure that the Traveller's safety, and the overall level of risk, is acceptable to the University.

Traveller Location

(21) Travellers must ensure that their location is known to the University while undertaking Travel for Business. Travel booked via the University's Travel Management Company will automatically record dates and locations and populate International SOS Travel Tracker.

(22) For travel booked outside the Travel Management Company, the Traveller must update the International SOS Travel Tracker with their itinerary. Failure to provide this information may limit the University's ability to assist the

Traveller in the event of an emergency.

Passport and Visa Requirements

(23) It is the responsibility of the Traveller to ensure that they possess a valid passport with a minimum six (6) month validity beyond the intended return date. Passport costs are the responsibility of the Traveller.

(24) It is the responsibility of the Traveller to ensure that they possess the relevant visas for the destination/s of travel.

(25) Visa costs associated with Travel for Business will be funded by the Faculty's or the Traveller's budget. Any additional visa costs associated with Personal Days are the responsibility of the Traveller. The Traveller's personal credit card details must be provided at the time of the request via their Travel Profile, the Online Booking Tool, or directly to the Travel Consultant.

(26) For further information on entry and transit requirements, contact the relevant foreign embassy or consulate (refer to Foreign Embassies and Consulates in Australia webpage).

Vaccination

(27) It is the responsibility of the Traveller to ensure that they have the required vaccinations prior to travel. Prior to booking travel, the Traveller must contact International SOS or a suitably qualified Medical Practitioner and confirm vaccination requirements for their destinations.

(28) It is strongly recommended that vaccination requirements identified by International SOS be administered prior to travel in the recommended timeframe. The Traveller must be able to provide verification of meeting vaccination requirements (e.g. vaccination card) upon request.

(29) Should the Traveller be unable to be vaccinated for medical, physical or other reasons they are required to report this to their line manager and the Health Monitoring Advisor via ohs@mq.edu.au as soon as practicable.

(30) Costs related to required vaccinations for travel on behalf of the University will be funded by the Faculty's or the Traveller's budget. Any vaccinations required for leisure travel are at the cost of the Traveller.

Dual-Purpose Travel

(31) At the discretion of the Authorising Officer, the University may allow Personal Days to be undertaken in conjunction with Travel for Business. The University will not fund any additional costs incurred as a result of adding Personal Days to Travel for Business.

(32) Prior to making any personal travel commitments or arrangements in conjunction with Travel for Business, all Travellers must comply with the Leave Policy.

(33) If the approved number of Personal Days is equal to or longer than the number of Business Days, or the destination is not directly attributable to the Travel for Business purpose, the travel will be deemed Dual-Purpose.

Partially-Funded Travel

(34) When the Traveller is travelling on behalf of the University, but the travel is only Partially-Funded by the University, travel arrangements must be made via the Travel Management Company with the balance of payment paid by the Traveller directly to the Travel Management Company at the time of booking.

Student Travel

(35) All student travel must be approved by the relevant Authorising Officer (e.g. student's course convenor, PhD Supervisor or equivalent). Travel must only be undertaken after due consideration of study needs, the risk profile of the travel destination and the activities to be undertaken whilst travelling.

(36) When travel is funded by the University, the student must comply with all aspects of this Policy and the Travel Procedure.

(37) Students participating in travel funded by the University must:

a. utilise the University's Travel Risk Assessment;
b. register their travel with International SOS;
c. ensure they have the required visas, vaccinations, and additional insurance (if required); and
d. comply with host institution policies and procedures (where applicable).

Spouse, Partner, and Dependant Travel

(38) The University will fund costs incurred for an accompanying spouse, partner, or dependant, where this supports the mission of the University and prior approval has been obtained from the Authorising Officer. This will incur a Fringe Benefits Tax liability for the University.

Accommodation

(39) Accommodation must be booked via the Travel Management Company Online Booking Tool or Travel Consultant. Accommodation rates must be in line with the recommended rates for a destination in accordance with the TravelRight webpage.

Travel Arrangements for Visiting Academics, Researchers, and Consultants

Domestic/Trans-Tasman

(40) When funded by the University, travel arrangements for visiting academics, researchers, and consultants who travel to destinations within Australia and New Zealand must be booked via the Travel Management Company Online Booking Tool or the Travel Consultant in accordance with the Travel Procedure.

International

(41) When funded by the University, travel arrangements for visiting academics, researchers, and consultants who travel to/from destinations outside Australia and New Zealand, must be made via the Travel Management Company Online Booking Tool or Travel Consultant in accordance with the Travel Procedure.

(42) Where the use of the Travel Management Company Online Booking Tool or Travel Consultant is not feasible and/or is significantly more expensive, travel arrangements may be facilitated by the Traveller's local travel agent with prior approval from the Authorising Officer, who must seek guidance from the Travel Category Manager. Correctly rendered tax invoices must be presented to the University for the purpose of reimbursement.

Travel Costs and Expenses

(43) The University will only fund travel costs and expenses when bookings are made and facilitated in accordance with this Policy and the Travel Procedure. Travellers who contravene this Policy and/or the Travel Procedure will be personally liable for any unauthorised travel costs.

Exceptions

(44) Any exceptions to this Policy will be managed by the University's Travel Category Manager at a Traveller profile level. Prior to submitting a request for an exception for medical reasons, the Traveller must consider the following:

a. If it is not safe for a Traveller to travel in accordance with this Policy and the Travel Procedure provisions and budget limitations, they should not travel at all. Any work activities that are not safe based on a medical condition and medical advice must be avoided.
b. If it is essential to Travel for Business reasons (as determined by the relevant Executive Dean or a member of the Executive Group), it is recommended that the University work with the Traveller's medical practitioner (through the University Health Management Advisor) to develop a safe travel plan.
c. Any change to travel class requires confirmation that it is within the budget and must be approved by the relevant Executive Dean or a member of the Executive Group.

Section 3 - Procedures

(45) Refer to the Travel Procedure.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(46) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(47) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Affiliate includes contractors, agents, honorary clinical or adjunct appointees and consultants of the University.
b. Authorising Officer means the Delegate who is permitted to approve travel in accordance with the Delegations of Authority Register, Delegations of Authority for Controlled Entities, and the provisions of this Policy.
c. Business Day means:
    i. a day on which University business is conducted;
    ii. a day on which an employee travels to/from the employee's usual place of business (usually Sydney) for University business purposes;
    iii. a day on which an employee travels to a location for official University purposes;
    iv. a weekend during the trip, where the preceding Friday and the following Monday are Business Days;
    v. a public holiday during the trip, where the preceding day and the following day are Business Days; and
    vi. a "recovery" day", which is the day following the day where an employee has completed a flight of nine (9) or more hours, provided the day after the recovery day is used for official University business.
d. Controlled Entity means a person, group of persons or body over which the University has control as defined in Section 16A of the Macquarie University Act 1989 (as amended) and Section 2.2 of the Government Sector Finance Act 2018.
e. Domestic Travel means travel within Australian borders.
f. Dual-Purpose Travel means a trip comprising Travel for Business and travel for leisure, where the leisure component is equal to or longer than the Travel for Business component or where a destination is not directly attributable to the Travel for Business purpose.
g. Health Management Advisor means an employee who is responsible for providing specialised health and safety advice.

h. International Travel means travel to any destination outside Australian borders.
i. Online Booking Tool means the tool/systems which Travellers use for airline, accommodation, and car bookings. The tool can be accessed via Online Booking Tool.
j. Partially-Funded Travel means where the University does not fully meet the travel expenses. Examples of when this might occur are:
    i. attendance at conferences;
    ii. absence on research field work; or
    iii. absence on special training courses / live-in courses.
k. Personal Day means a day that is not a Business Day including a day on which no University business is conducted, a day/days of booked leave, weekends, or public holidays.
l. Trans-Tasman means travel between Australia and New Zealand.
m. Travel Category Manager means the University's Strategic Sourcing Portfolio Manager, Travel and Corporate Services, who is a member of the Strategic Procurement function.
n. Travel Consultant means a consultant at a Travel Management Company, who facilitates travel reservations for Travellers.
o. Travel for Business means travel approved by an Authorising Officer as part of University business, which may include associated costs for airfares, accommodation, car hire, or other authorised travel costs.
p. Travel Management Company means the supplier/s contracted to provide services associated with booking travel on behalf of the University.
q. Travel Profile means a profile of a University Traveller, who is authorised to travel on behalf of the University.
r. Traveller means anyone who undertakes travel on behalf of the University and/or incurs travel or related expenses.

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